

SPEECH BY THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER ON  
DEFENCE AND DEVELOPMENT IN MALAYSIA  
AT THE GRAND ALLIANCE CONVENTION,  
KUALA LUMPUR ON 31ST MARCH, 1963

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I greatly welcome the opportunity of addressing this Conference of Alliance Leaders from all the territories which will come together by the Grace of God on 31st August as a new independent and sovereign Nation of Malaysia. I would like personally to extend my personal and very warm welcome to the delegates from Sabah, Sarawak, Brunei and Singapore. We are very happy indeed that they have come to the national capital to join hands with us here to form a Grand Alliance so that when Malaysia comes into being we all shall be able to work together as members of one Party with common belief and objective to serve our new Nation and our new country.

It would be the duty of all of us here and those who subscribe to our ideals and objectives and who generally believe in freedom and democracy to exert their utmost efforts not only to bring Malaysia into being but also to see that it is a reality and to succeed in becoming a strong, united and happy country. We live in a difficult and divided world and for Malaysia in the next few years will be a challenging time. There will be problems, there will be difficulties for us to overcome, but I have no doubt that if we are united and if we stand together to defend the ideals and the principle which we subscribe, we shall overcome all these difficulties. Let us remember that, if there are no difficulties in this world, there will be no triumphs.

I am so pleased that the leaders of Sabah and Sarawak have been able to accept the Inter-Governmental Committee's recommendations with a spirit of compromise and goodwill. It is true that the recommendations of the Inter-Governmental Committee

represent the maximum agreement possible in the circumstances but they provide the basis for constitutional and administrative arrangements which would enable these two territories, Sabah and Sarawak, to join Malaysia as full and equal members to play their full part in national as well as international affairs of our new Nation. All these arrangements are not intended to be permanent. They should be reviewed from time to time to see whether they meet with our needs and requirements and whether they serve our paramount objective of building a united and happy Nation. We, from the Federation of Malaya, welcome our brothers and sisters in the new territories as equals and we extend to them the hands of friendship and I hope they in their turn will appreciate that we have nothing but goodwill and understanding towards them and our sole desire is to work together as members of one United Nation. I hope that in the course of time, it would be possible for the people of these new territories to regard Kuala Lumpur as their capital and not merely as a distant city and to regard the Central Government here, of which they will be full members, as their own Government which is designed to serve not only one part of the territory or one section of the community, but the whole of Malaysia and all the citizens of whatever race, colour, or creed.

that is why I consider it very opportune indeed that all of us here from all sections of our community, that before the birth of this new Nation is to be formed, we should rededicate ourselves to the great and inspiring task that lie ahead of us of building a united, stable and happy nation of Malaysia.

I have been asked, Ladies and Gentlemen, to speak on two subjects of which I am particularly responsible, i.e. development and defence. These two subjects, are of vital importance to our new Nation. Indeed, they are vitally important to any nation, because if we compare a country to a river, the two banks must be, on one side, economic development and on the other, defence and security. If these two banks can be kept solid and strong, then as the water of the river flows steadily, the country marches forward and prospers. Now, let us first take development. Naturally as a new and young Nation our people in all walks of life, towns, villages, kampongs and the long-houses, all expect to get development with a change in

the status; they expect changes in their ways of life; they expect improvements to their standard of living; they expect better amenities of life. Indeed, these are all the rising expectations of a new, independent and developing Nation. It would be our duty to meet these needs to satisfy these rising expectations to the best of our ability and resources.

Now, before I talk about development, we have got to get our thinking on the subject quite clear and start on a framework free from fear and doubt. Fears have existed both in the ranks of our various parties and also in several sections of the community that the formation of Malaysia would be an economic drain on the resources of Malaya and would affect the impetus of both our development programme here in Malaya and each of the three territories. I think that these doubts have arisen in the minds of those who have not got a clear picture of the concept of Malaysia.

The real concept is this: that Malaya itself is a country with considerable development potential in the form of natural resources, **both** material and human. Sabah, Sarawak, Brunei and Singapore are four territories each with their considerable economic resources and development potential. Therefore, it is logical and it is an undeniable fact that the coming together of these five territories, their harnessing into one viable whole, their economic resources, and the combination of concentrated efforts towards progress and development of Malaysia will result in definite gains to each territory concerned and will give a greater impetus to our present development programmes which are already well underway.

There is no need for me here to prove this point at length. I am sure that history would prove it and our children and descendants will realise that we, in establishing Malaysia, have taken the right step for the interest of all our territories and of ourselves. If you remember, before the formation of the present Federation of Malaya, the same fears and doubts existed. Before Merdeka, each State felt that they were giving up too much to the Federation without receiving sufficient in return. I know this fact because at that particular time I was the Mentri Besar of a State and was as equally isolated and sceptical in my thinking as anyone else, full of

ideas and anxieties to protect the individual interests of my State. A matter of days later, after the first National Elections, I was on the other side of the fence as a Federal Minister. Now, looking back on these days and remembering the similar doubts and fears which existed before Merdeka, it is incredible to see how soon they were forgotten and events have proved, in the form of tangible progress, that the concept of Malaya under our present Constitution was correct, that our system of Federation with a strong Central Government was correct, and that it worked well in practice. So with Malaysia, the concept is logical and the same principles and practice will prove right and correct. In other words, the teething troubles which we already experienced before and after the birth of an independent Malaya are no different to the teething troubles which we can expect in the first few years after the birth of Malaysia.

Therefore, it seems to me now the most important task for all of us and indeed our first task is to help everyone to fully understand the correct concept of Malaysia. It is essential that in doing so, we can go ahead together on the economic development of the new Nation based on a framework for the future which spells hope of progress and prosperity. I think that we should regard that the coming together of these territories for Malaysia is the coming together of people each with their own assets to join a Co-operative Society, the correct operation of that Society must, will, and can be of benefit to the individual members of the Society. But it should also be remembered that for a Co-operative Society to be a success, to get an advantage from the Society, members must be prepared to give, it is to be a "giving and getting"; there must be give and take, that is the spirit which will make Malaysia and development within Malaysia a success.

In thinking of Malaysia prior to its actual establishment, some people tend to forget what tremendous national energies will be released which, at present, are either suppressed or non-existent before Independence. Independence will act as a vitamin for the rejuvenation of the whole Nation. We in Malaya have experienced this already and it is the harnessing of this new found vitality which, in my opinion, has helped us to make such strides already since achieving Independence. In five years as an independent and free

nation, we have achieved more and developed more than could be attained in 50 years of rule by a Custodian Government. Those who talk of neo-colonialism are talking neo-nonsense. The vitality of our development plan is proof of this vitamin of Independence. This is one of the greatest hidden potentials in the future development of Malaysia which cannot be accounted for in rates, revenues or tariffs. In fact, it is the main-spring of an independent and free Nation, and it will be the main-spring of a future and free Malaysia provided that main-spring takes off from a firm foundation of faith, goodwill and mutual understanding.

Furthermore, in drawing comparisons between a free and independent Malaysia to that of a set of territories under Colonial rule, it should be remembered that it is the traditional policy and practice of such Colonial Governments to advocate and exercise under caution in the expenditure of public funds. On the other hand, in the case of Malaya, on achieving Independence, financial caution was not thrown to the winds nor was it allowed to impede the National Development. With financial caution and sensible expenditure, and motivated by the energies released by Independence, these have enabled us to achieve results and to carry out development which we can justly say are beyond the expectations of many of us.

#### DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AFTER MALAYSIA

Now with regard to the future development planning and the implementation of such plans within Malaysia, we have requested the World Bank to set up conditions to recommend concrete steps which should be taken in the field of economic policy to effect such economic co-ordination to the maximum advantage of all the territories. You can see that we have already taken action to start sound economic planning. This Mission is now at work and it is hoped that it will be possible to produce a working outline blueprint as a guide for the future economic development of Malaysia. However, I hope it is remembered that plans in themselves do not produce development results. In this modern world, the art of good government is the ability to close the gap between theory and practice; the ability to translate plans into action; action into results.

## FACTORS IN DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

In the world today events are usually discussed under the various headings; political, economic and social, and these classifications are frequently treated separately by political scientists, economists, sociologists and administrators.

I do not believe that social, economic and political factors in development planning, can be treated in such close water-tight compartments, because if this is done it tends to create, in development implementation, a lag between theory and practice which is reflected in wasteful frictions and antagonisms between the Government, Business, Trade Unions, Education and other Institutions and sections of the community.

To allow such a lag to exist between theory and practice is a luxury which no new Nation can afford.

If Malaysia is to succeed, if Malaysia is to develop, if we are to achieve progress and prosperity for our people in every town and in every Kampong, then we need, at our disposal, every ounce of energy that we can possibly put into development; every ounce of energy wasted of friction, misunderstanding and selfishness is a deterrent to development, and a loss to progress.

### ECONOMIC ASPECTS

On the economic aspect of our future development I think we must be cautious in accepting theories and practices which apply in other countries; and although our main aim is greater economic growth and greater prosperity, let us remember that prosperity in both the rural and urban areas should not always be judged by the same material gains which are the yardstick of progress in the more advanced Nations of the World.

Economic growth is a necessary goal for Malaysia, but it must not be considered to outweigh all others, nor should it be assumed that every action that increases wealth is necessarily right.

The increase of wealth, the raising of our overall standard of living, is an essential factor in our future economic development. But such economic development will only be satisfactory if it acts to preserve the meaning of life, not destroy it.

So therefore our development should have a focus not entirely on material gain, but a focus also on the human, social, cultural and religious aspects of our lives, so that we can build up a Malaysia which is not only economically stable, but which is also a Nation of people who are happy within themselves, self-reliant, and secure within their own sincerity of purpose.

## POLITICS—THE ART OF GOVERNMENT

On the political aspect of our future development let us remember the real and original meaning of the word politics, which means "the science or art of government". And I do feel that in order to implement a sound development plan the first thing to be done is to close the gap between the sometimes vague and irresponsible political thinking on the one hand, and sound development planning, administration and implementation on the other. Unselfish politicians can do this!

To do this one has to attract into the field of politics people who are sincere in themselves, ambitious for the good of the Nation and not their own gains; honest with themselves; honest with those whom they represent; and who have above all a sense of unselfish service.

It has been said many times that the difference between a politician and a statesman is that—

A politician thinks of the next election and

A statesman thinks of the next generation

In this context let it always be said of Alliance politicians that, not only do they think of the next generation, but they think, from day to day, of the next opportunity, which they can give unselfish service to Malaysia.

The main role of a politician in implementing a Development Programme is not really to make speeches for his own glory but rather to close the gap between the government and the governed so that the implementation of a Development Plan is a partnership between the people and the government, each playing an equally important part with the elected politician in between as liaison link, liaison leader, persuader for good, and promoter of progress; not for his own gains, but, for the gains of the Nation as a whole.

## RURAL DEVELOPMENT

With regard to Rural Development in Malaysia I feel confident that if the principles which have been applied so successfully by the Alliance Government in implementing our Rural Development Programme in Malaya are applied in the same way to the greater concept of Malaysia then there is every hope of development in Malaysia being a success.

Let me remind you what these principles were.

The foundation for positive action on Rural Development was based on the principle of partnership between the government and the rural people themselves.

If we look at a map of Malaya and on it compare the distance separating the Federal Capital from the more remote Kampongs in our rural areas, we remember that many Kampongs are far away and that a journey to them by road, by rail or by river would take many, many hours.

However, in keeping with the tempo of modern travel the Alliance Government made it possible to make a journey into the heart and soul of the development needs of any Kampong in record time; this journey takes less than one minute: it is a mental journey made possible by the use of "Red Books".

The Red Book was conceived, designed and put to use by the Alliance Government, for the purpose of ensuring that, no matter how far away any Kampong may be, nevertheless, the hopes and needs of its people are forever near to the heart of Government.

The Red Book is in fact, therefore, tangible proof of the fulfilment of that trust the people of the rural areas placed in the present Government when they themselves chose it to take charge of the affairs of their country.

Similarly, let us look at a map of Malaysia and I feel with confidence, in the future, that what the Alliance Government had already done in Malaya, not only can they do in the development of Malaysia but can do so, even better, from the experience in practice which we have already gained.

## DETAILED ASPECTS OF DEVELOPMENT

Time does not permit me to go into detail with each and every aspect of future development of the Nation, but I would like to touch on one subject which applies to both Rural Development and overall National Development and this is the subject of roads. In the development of our country, it is clear from experience in Malaya that development follows roads and not the other way round. Some people think that it is necessary to make an economic survey of development potential before roads are built. Although this is desirable, in actual practice you can only get development after roads have been constructed. I am firmly convinced that roads are the bloodstreams of economy; rural roads are the bloodstreams to our rural economy and major roads are the bloodstreams to our national economy.

Let me give you an analogy from medical science. If in fact the blood cannot flow to any particular part of the body then that part of the body ceases to function and eventually becomes diseased, decayed and dead.

So it is with Kampongs, in this modern world, which are completely cut off and have no access to and from the economic bloodstream of our nation.

Roads in the rural areas do not only contribute to the economic development of the area but also they open up access for better education, better medical health services, better information services, better agriculture and veterinary extension services.

It is argued, however, that such roads into the rural areas merely open up the way for the bad effects of modern civilisation.

I refute this; admittedly, that when the blood flows to any part of the body there is every chance of the bloodstream being polluted by a virus but the danger of such virus does not deny the fact that a bloodstream is essential to health.

So it is with Roads. We make roads and plenty of them with our eyes open knowing that they may be polluted, from time to time, by the virus of the middlemen but the cure is not to stop making roads. The cure is to devise ways and means to eliminate the virus so that the economy of the Kampong is strong enough to stand on its own and to resist exploitation.

The point I am trying to make is that one of the greatest development needs in the new Malaysia will be roads.

From Sibil to Sandakan!

From Kuching to Kuala Belait!

From Kuala Kangsar to Kuala Trengganu!

Roads will have to be the bloodstream of our new Nation. But they are expensive to make and we will need them at a time when our financial resources are already being strained.

There are, however, throughout the World, many programmes of technical and development aid and I sincerely hope that those friendly nations who fully support Malaysia and wish to show their support, not only in words, but in some form of tangible token, the best contribution they could make would be to give assistance in developing the road network of the new Malaysia.

It would be a tremendous monument to international co-operation on development if we could so be assisted in developing a network of roads; each highway, be it large or small, to be named after the donor Nation.

This is not a request; it is only a suggestion. But I would like to remind those free nations which are willing to help Malaysia with tangible aid that there need be no fear of such aid being misinterpreted. The formation of Malaysia is really an "international marriage" of five countries and it is an established practice throughout the World to give wedding presents so that the marriage can start properly equipped, and have a chance of success; any friendly Nation which wishes to give a few miles of new roads as a wedding gift need have no fear of being accused of neo-colonialism. They could only be accused of neo-matrimonialism.

## THE LAW OF DEVELOPMENT

I think the great thing that we must remember in the future development of Malaysia is that in the Inter-Governmental negotiations and in the drafting of the new Constitution a lot has been done by Legal Draftsmen and a lot has been said of Constitutional Law.

But in development there is also a law which we can apply, a law which has not been drafted or made by mankind, it is a law of nature of what we can call the law of "cause and effect".

The law of cause and effect is roughly this—in the World nothing really happens automatically, even crops don't grow automatically; if a farmer wants to grow a crop he has got to clear the land, so the seed and work hard in tending the crop, to get results.

And so it is with Development. Just talking about development, just making development plans, just hoping for development will never in fact result in development.

This is where the law of Nature, the law of cause and effect, applies.

To achieve development, to achieve economic growth, to achieve a happy and highly developed Malaysia, means hard work, harnessing of all our energies and the ability of political leaders to convert emotion into motion towards sound economic development of a happy and stable MALAYSIA!

## DEFENCE

I would now like to talk briefly about the defence problems and policy for Malaysia. I am sure, Ladies and Gentlemen, you all fully appreciate that with Malaysia our defence commitments will increase. We will have a much bigger coastline to guard and bigger areas to defend. Furthermore, with the present confrontation attitude of Indonesia, it would be necessary for us to have sufficient Armed Forces to guard our country in the event of any outbreak or trouble.

As Minister of Defence, I have now put up my proposals for the increase of our Armed Forces, the Army, the Navy and Air Force, to meet our increased responsibilities. Expansion of our Armed Forces will take some years to carry out, but a start has already been made. We have now placed orders for new aircraft, new patrol boats and machinery and equipment. We have also started recruiting men for the expansion of all the three Services.

The principal task of our Armed Forces will be for assisting the internal security and for close defence of our territories. The Federation of Malaya has a Defence Agreement with the United Kingdom and that Defence Agreement will be applied to the new territories of Malaysia.

However, as I have said, we have to increase the size of our Armed Forces considerably. Our total expenditure will have to double itself in the next few years. We have made no provision for this increase in our budget and we hope that we shall be able to obtain external aid from our friends, in particular, from Britain. We hope to give opportunities to the citizens of all the territories to take part in the defence of our country. Singapore has now two battalions of infantry regiment and Brunei, on her own accord, has established one battalion, which is now being brought to full strength. We have asked the British Government, in conjunction with the Governments of Sabah and Sarawak, to start recruiting a battalion for each of the territories so that when Malaysia comes into being we shall have at least one battalion for each of the territories which will be brought to full strength in due course and

which will be trained fully to take part in the defence of the territories. I am sure it will be appreciated that the people of Sabah, Sarawak and Brunei—the Malays, the Dyaks, the Ibans, the Kadazan, the Chinese and all who are known for their warlike spirit will be able to play their full part in the defence of our country.

Our policy, as is Well known, is to be friendly with all countries, particularly, with our neighbours and indeed the main object of establishing Malaysia is to bring peace and stability to this area and we hope that we shall be able to maintain friendly relations with all our neighbours. However, we have always to be on guard and we must have sufficient forces for internal security as well as to meet any eventuality that may arise. Therefore, our defence expenditure will rise in the course of years and the burden will have to be borne by all citizens of Malaysia. I have already said that with Malaysia, we shall share equally, whatever the resources that we have. Our various territories have enormous potentialities and I have no doubt that in the course of years we shall be able to meet increasing burdens not only in defence, but also in development.